



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**BEYOND BAROQUE LITERARY ARTS CENTER ANNOUNCES THE
WINNERS OF ITS SEVENTH ANNUAL POETRY CONTEST!**

Now in its eighth year, the 2017 Beyond Baroque Poetry Contest was judged by the award-winning poet Matthew Zapruder. Each winner receives a cash prize: first place \$1000; second place \$500; and third place \$250. In addition to the three top prizes, two runner-ups were chosen. Winners and runners-up were chosen through a blind reading process in which the judge had no knowledge of the poems' authors. Judge Matthew Zapruder had this to say about her selections (without knowing authors identities):

First Place Winner, IMMIGRATION ALGORITHM (by Mark Svenvold):

This marvelously handled sestina manages to be gorgeous, mysterious, and symbolic. It engages in a subtle and completely original way with a matter of urgent political concern, without resorting to platitudes or easy didacticism. I come back again and again to this poem with

Second Place Winner: ALGAE (Nikki Ochoa):

This peculiar poem seems to describe a journey into an interior dream landscape, something like an institutional space full of memories and psychic avatars. I read the poem many times, loving its clear description, unsure exactly of why I was so moved. The combination of clarity and mystery was irresistible.

Third Place Winner : PLENTY: COUNTY GALWAY (by Lauren Conklin)

What a pleasure to read an honest poem about sex and desire that feels both real and mythic. The poem feels expansive, simultaneously general and specific, public and personal. The end is a knockout.

Runners-up in alphabetical listing of the poem's title: **GRASS EATERS (by John Blair), SURRENDER, SHE SAID (by Steve McDonald), SEEING THE BIG DOG (by Katherine Ogle), sympathy cards (by Althea Irby), THE BOULEVARDS OF LOS ANGELES (by Marcus Elman), THE FAMOUS POET ASKS ME FOR NAKED PHOTOS (by Alexis Rhone Fancher), and WHEN THE WAR COMES (by Kelly Grace Thomas).**

A reading of the winning poems will be held at Beyond Baroque on Saturday, April 28, at 4:00 PM.

Beyond Baroque is one of the United States' leading independent Literary Arts Centers and public spaces dedicated to literary and cultural performance, outreach, and community building. Founded in 1968, and based in the Old Town Hall in Venice Beach, California, the Center houses a bookstore, archive, gallery and theater. Beyond Baroque offers weekly readings, art exhibitions, and free workshops - all inspired by, and in the service of, the literary arts. Beyond Baroque is located at 681 Venice Boulevard, in Venice Beach, California.